



## BOARD FOR PROFESSIONAL ENGINEERS AND LAND SURVEYORS

2535 Capitol Oaks Drive, Suite 300, Sacramento, CA 95833-2944

Telephone: (916) 263-2222 CALNET: 8-435-2222

Facsimile: (916) 263-2246

www.dca.ca.gov/pels



### **INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS** **FOR CALIFORNIA STRUCTURAL ENGINEER APPLICATION**

It is the applicant's responsibility to compile and submit a correct and complete application package. A partial application packet will not be considered for evaluation and/or examination.

A complete application package must contain the application, application fee, engagement record and reference forms in signed and sealed envelopes from references, sealed college transcripts (if applicable).

#### **CHECK LIST FOR APPLICATION PACKAGE**

- \_\_\_\_\_ Complete and sign the [application](#). Make a copy for your records.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Submit a check or money order made payable to the "Department of Consumer Affairs."
- \_\_\_\_\_ Three [Engagement Record and Reference Forms](#) (minimum) enclosed in signed and sealed/stamped envelopes from your references containing **both** Part A and Part B. (You provide the envelopes)
- \_\_\_\_\_ [Verification of Employment](#) (required only if experience credit for structural plan checking is being requested).
- \_\_\_\_\_ [Verification of Licensure](#) (required only if verifying completion of NCEES Structural II exam or the Western States Structural exam).
- \_\_\_\_\_ Two self-addressed and stamped postcards. The Board will use these cards to notify you regarding the status of your application.
- \_\_\_\_\_ Certified copies of court documents for any criminal convictions required to be disclosed in response to Question 9 on the application. **If you are unable to obtain certified copies of the court documents, you must provide the name/location of the court, the case number (if known), and the date of the conviction, along with a description of the criminal conviction, in the Remarks section of the application.**

**General** – California grants the authority to use the title "Structural Engineer" to licensed civil engineers who successfully complete an examination process. This application is required with evidence of experience and references.

- The name you use on this application must be the same as the name on your civil license. If you wish to change your name on your civil license, please complete, sign and send the [Name Change Affidavit](#) to the Board.
- The address you use on the application will be your address of record. Licensees' names and addresses are public records and are published in both electronic and

print media, as well as disclosed upon request to the Board. You may choose to use a home address, a post office box, or a business address. If you wish to change your address of record for your civil license, use the [Address Change Affidavit](#).

This information is a summary of some of the important requirements relating to certification to use the title “Structural Engineer.” It is not intended to apply to every situation. You are responsible for complying with the current complete requirements in the [Professional Engineers Act](#) and the [Board Rules and Regulations](#).

**Eligibility** – Each applicant for authority to use the title “Structural Engineer” must:

- hold a valid and current license as a civil engineer in California.
- provide evidence showing three years of qualifying, full-time experience “in responsible charge” of structural engineering work. The three years must have been gained after the date of the examination which was passed to obtain initial licensure as a civil engineer.
- pass the required National Structural and California specific 8-hour examination (total time 16-hour).
- pay the required fee.

Neither U.S. citizenship nor California residence is required. However, **disclosure of your social security number or individual taxpayer identification number is mandatory.** U.S. citizens who do not have a social security number may contact their local United States Social Security Office at 1-800-722-1213 or <http://www.ssa.gov/online/forms.html>. Non-U.S. citizens without a social security number may request an Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (ITIN) from the Department of Treasury (Internal Revenue Service) at (215) 516-4846 or <http://www.irs.gov>.

**Experience Requirements** – Qualifying experience is counted three years from the date of the examination which was passed to obtain initial licensure as a civil engineer. You may count experience up to the date you file your application, however, if you file within 30 days before the final filing date, you may count experience up to that date.

**Qualifying Experience** – This consists of professional level employment “in responsible charge” of major projects. It does not include overtime, trainee, or orientation programs, any work done before initial license as a civil engineer, or work done on exempt structures as defined in Section 6737.1 of the Business and Professions Code.

Qualifying experience shall include structural design experience in all areas as follows:

- Use of three of the four common construction materials – Steel, Concrete, Wood and Masonry
- determination of lateral forces – seismic or wind
- selection of framing systems
- selection of foundation systems
- application of code requirements

- multi-story buildings or equivalent multi-level structures

Checking of structural engineering plans and calculations is also considered qualifying experience provided that the work is performed under the immediate supervision of, and certified to, by licensed structural engineer.

For work experience to be accepted as satisfactory each engagement must be separate and distinct – dual credit will not be allowed for overlapping engagements.

**Definition of “responsible charge”** – The term “responsible charge” means the process of exercising control and direction of professional engineering work, and making engineering decisions which can only be made by a professional engineer. Responsible charge directly relates to the span or degree of control over projects that a professional engineer is required to maintain.

The span of control necessary to be “in responsible charge” is such that the engineer:

- (1) personally makes engineering decisions concerning a project, including consideration of alternatives, or reviews and approves proposed decisions prior to their implementation, whenever such decisions affect the health, safety, or welfare of the public; and
- (2) judges the qualifications of technical specialists and the validity and applicability of their recommendations before such recommendations are incorporated into the work.

When making critical engineering decisions, the engineer must be physically present or be available by telephone or other communication devices within a reasonable period of time. The engineer must be a licensed civil engineer in the state where the work experience took place in order for that engagement to qualify as “responsible charge.”

**Examination Dates/Locations** – The National Structural II examination will be administered in April and October, beginning with the April 2006 examination administration. The California Structural Engineering Seismic examination is administered only in October. Refer to the [current schedule](#) for the date of the next exam and the final filing date. Except as noted below, failure to appear for a scheduled exam will result in cancellation of the application and forfeiture of the application fee. Exams are administered at a few locations across the state, usually in the Los Angeles, Sacramento, San Diego, and San Francisco areas. You will be assigned to the site located nearest to the address on your application. If you wish to take the exam at a specific site, you must submit a written request for the site you prefer with your application.

**Special Accommodations** – Effective July 23, 2004, the Board is no longer handling requests for special accommodations. The National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) will be overseeing this procedure. If you have a need for special testing due to religious beliefs or for reasons falling within the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), you must complete the appropriate form and mail it, along with the required documentation, to the address on the form. Do **NOT** send the form or the documentation to

the Board; this will delay the processing of your request. All requests must be submitted to NCEES by the final filing date for the examination. If you have any questions regarding these forms, contact NCEES via e-mail at: [ncol@mindspring.com](mailto:ncol@mindspring.com).

- Special Accommodations under the ADA: If you require special testing accommodations for reasons falling within the ADA, you must complete the [Questionnaire for Applicants Requesting Special Accommodations](#). In order to receive special accommodations, this form must be completed and returned, along with the required supporting documentation, to NCEES at the address listed on the form by the final filing date for the examination for which you are applying. Do **NOT** submit this form or the supporting documentation to the Board.
- Religious Accommodations: If you are unable to attend the examination on the set date due to your religious beliefs, you must complete the [Religious Accommodations Request Form](#). In order to receive accommodations, this form must be completed and returned, along with the required supporting documentation, to NCEES at the address listed on the form by the final filing date for the examination for which you are applying. Do **NOT** submit this form or the supporting documentation to the Board.

**Examination Scope** – Effective October 2004, applicants wishing to use the title “Structural Engineer” will be required to pass the national examination as well as the state specific examination. Each examination is 8 hours for a total of 16 hours (administered over two days). Information on the national examination, also known as Structural II, can be obtained by contacting the National Council of Examiners for Engineering and Surveying (NCEES) at <http://www.ncees.org>.

The California Structural Engineering Seismic Examination will be comprised of multiple-choice and design/essay problems. The multiple-choice section of the examination will be held in the morning and the design/essay portion will be held in the afternoon. Examinees should attempt to work all problems. The examination will test the candidate’s skills in: development of seismic design criteria, seismic analysis of new and existing structures, seismic design and detailing of structures, and seismic review of existing structures. The design/essay portion of the examination will emphasize on of each of the following: Multi-story Building, School/Hospital, and Existing Structures. All problems will have seismic content and all common construction materials will be covered (steel, concrete, wood and masonry). Refer to the [California Structural Engineering Seismic Examination Candidate Handbook](#) and [Structural Engineering Test Plan](#) for additional information.

**Cancellation of Application and Forfeiture of Fee** – Any of the following actions will result in cancellation of the application and forfeiture of the filing fee:

- failure to appear for examination as scheduled, without obtaining a postponement from the Board;
- failure to respond to a request from the Board for information within 90 days from the date of mailing of such a request.

### **Personal Reference Alternatives for Structural Engineering Applicants**

It has come to the Board's attention that applicants for authority to use the title "Structural Engineer" in California may have trouble obtaining appropriate references to meet the Board's requirements. It is the Board's desire to assist such applicants by providing information on how to obtain references from qualified persons who are a California licensed Structural Engineer or licensed in a state with which California has a comity agreement regarding structural licensing (Idaho, Hawaii, Nevada, Washington, and Oregon, depending on the year). It is also the Board's desire to make it clear that an applicant for the structural license need not have worked for any of the structural engineers who are providing the references.

In order to assist applicants in securing the required references, here are some suggestions, which are offered for consideration. Specifically, the following cases represent situations which may have yielded contacts with appropriately licensed structural engineers who could be used as possible references:

- A structural engineer associated with or employed by a client firm for which the applicant's firm has performed structural engineering work.
- A structural engineer associated with or employed by another engineering firm with which the applicant's firm has engaged in a joint venture on a structural engineering project.
- A structural engineer associated with or employed by a building department to which the applicant has submitted plans and/or calculations for a plan check review.
- One or more California licensed structural engineers who are willing to review an adequate sample of the applicant's work in order to evaluate his/her qualifying experience. (Our website contains a "License Lookup" feature that can list the structural engineers that live in your area).
- The Structural Engineers Association of California (SEAOC) has agreed to provide a panel of licensed structural engineers, at no cost to the applicant, to examine samples of the applicant's work, to conduct an in-depth review and discussion with the applicant concerning those work samples, and based on that review and discussion, to serve as references on behalf of the applicant. SEAOC establishes a review panel from a limited pool of practicing engineers who volunteer as their schedules allow. As such, this review may be a lengthy process. SEAOC strongly urges applicants to request a review at least three months prior to submitting their application to the Board. The applicant must contact SEAOC directly at the below address and telephone number:

Lee Adler  
Executive Director  
555 Capitol Mall, Suite 755  
Sacramento CA 95814  
916-442-0820